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CONTACT: Sue Walitsky, Cardin 202-224-4524

Rachel MacKnight, Mikulski 202-228-1122

CARDIN, MIKULSKI ANNOUNCE FUNDS IN THE FEDERAL CHECKBOOK TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN WESTERN MARYLAND

Health education center wins grant to recruit and retain physicians

WASHINGTON, D.C. – **U.S. Senators Benjamin L. Cardin and Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-Md.) today announced the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has awarded \$12,310 in grant funding to the Western Maryland Area Health Education Center (AHEC) in Cumberland, Allegany County, to support the recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural Western Maryland.

"Every Marylander and every American should have access to quality, affordable health care and this ARC grant helps make that possible for more people in Western Maryland," **said Senator Cardin**. "I am proud that we are able to provide federal resources to help improve training opportunities and expand access to electronic health records, which will benefit so many in our most rural communities."

"Making sure all Americans have access to competent and compassionate healthcare is one of my top priorities," **Senator Mikulski** said. "That's why I'm fighting for improving preventive health care and increasing the number of primary health care providers, especially in underserved, rural communities. This grant means more doctors with better resources right here in Western Maryland, and I'm proud of the work Western Maryland AHEC has done to make that a possibility."

The grant, awarded to fund the *Technology Resources for Health Professional Recruitment and Retention* project, will allow the Western Maryland AHEC to purchase equipment that improves training for medical residents, such as laptops that give the residents access to medical records in otherwise remote areas. The grant will also be used to improve telecommunications equipment that will benefit other programs administered by the Western Maryland AHEC, including educational programs at the pre-college and professional levels.

The ARC is a federal-state partnership that works with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life. The funding for this grant was provided through a special ARC regional initiative, which targets funds to encourage and support telecommunications-related economic development. In addition to ARC funding, Western Maryland AHEC will provide a dollar-for-dollar match, bringing the total project cost to \$26,620.

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